

## ← Artworld

! Notes from various sources, esp. Stallybrass, Art Incorporated

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### ! Thesis one

- The current art world system, especially in the west and cosmopolitan areas, is a subset of global neoliberalism
- Even though it often appears to be in conflict with or opposed to or differentiated from the dominant order of things.
- INSERT DEFINITION HERE OF NEOLIBERALISM
  - Appears to be in contrast to instrumental, administrative logic of the dominant order
  - Appears to be vs. bureaucratic life
  - Appears to be vs. commercialized mass culture

### ! Thesis two

- The artworld economy
  - Seems to be based on unique or rare items
  - The work of mechanically reproduced art is constrained by artists and dealers
    - Limited editions
    - Numbered series of reproductions
    - Economic system of these arts is based in
      - ! Artist reputation (fame, celebrity, critical esteem, etc.)
  - Therefore, artists tend to escape from the most obvious marketing determinations of the commercial field
    - They appear to make from free will, rather than audience expectations; they can break with conventions, rules, taboos
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  - it appears to be determined by various gatekeepers such as collectors, dealers, critics, curators, etc.

### ! Thesis three

- The profession of artist is appealing
  - Seems to offer labor free of specialization

- Given to self-will (under the terms of creative expression, making from the heart and/or soul, etc.)
- For the art audience it seems that things are also “free” and “open”
  - Separate from the instrumental world of work and daily routine and economics
- The economy of global capital is not self evident to those at the core
  - E.g. “cultural imperialism” model is more evident to the importing country than to the exporting country
  - It is harder to pin down in a postcolonial era when taste is not informed through trade regulation, formal education, etc.
- There is an international art market which is cosmopolitan, but clearly dominated by a system of financial power exactly parallel to global financial markets.
  - The US is the major player (about half) with Europe dominating most of the rest in fine arts.
  - Art prices and art sales tend to match the stockmarket and financial markets.
    - Art is not only an area of “purposeless free play” (for the audience/consumer), but also a small speculative market which uses art objects for investment, tax avoidance, money laundering
- Art must hide its direct relation to the economy by claiming expressive freedom, unfettered (except by censorship, which it is obliged to fight against) and invoking the practice of DISTINCTION as its means of access and entry.
- While it can explore the darkside, the undercurrent, the deepest despair, by doing so it helps create an aura of freedom.
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# ! Thesis

- Free trade and free art are inextricably bound--a dominant system and its supplement
  - Free art disavows its relation to free trade

- Art seeks to portray novelty and provocation
  - In this it is the verso of advertising
  - “As in the parade of products in mass culture, forms and signs are mixed and matched, as if every element of the culture was an exchangeable token, as tradable as a dollar.” (St 7)
- ! Why are artists so poor?
  - [http://www.xs4all.nl/~abbing/DOCeconomist/new\\_book.htm](http://www.xs4all.nl/~abbing/DOCeconomist/new_book.htm)

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